

Girton Parish Council

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The Pavilion
Girton Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road, Girton
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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 8 May 2008 at the Cotton Hall 8pm

The meeting was attended by approximately 23 residents, Parish, County and District Councillors, PCSO Karen Mahoney and Peter Duthie (Cambridgeshire County Council). The meeting was chaired by the Chairman Cllr Douglas de Lacey.

1. Welcome from the Chairman and introduction of Parish Councillors

The Chairman, the Parish Councillors and the Clerk introduced themselves. Cllr Ford-Smith expressed his thanks to Cllr de Lacey for his commitment to the parish. Cllr Bullman also expressed thanks to the community for the support he has been given during his 25 years as a District Councillor. Cllr de Lacey thanked him for his work during this time.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllrs Peter Starling and Ron Martin, Linda Miller, Hilda Dowding, John and Valerie Hall, James and Janet Barnard, Sheila Hiley, Ian Burton, Noel Knights, Roger Few and Joan Field.

3. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 25 April 2007

The minutes had been circulated. Cllr Godby proposed and Cllr Bullman seconded and it was agreed that the minutes were a correct record of that meeting.

4. Matters arising from minutes

Item 5 – Cllr Hiley enquired about the status of the works requested at Girton Corner in the Petition of 2006. Cllr de Lacey replied that one item (the removal of the railings) has been effected, 2 or 3 have been approved and we are still waiting for a County Council response to the rest.

Item 12 was brought forward as PCSO Mahoney had other duties to attend to.

12. Police and Security

a) Representative from Histon Police Station

PCSO Mahoney introduced herself and reported the following:

The latest crime figures I have for Girton are based in the most recent profile which was completed in February for the previous three months. I am pleased to say Girton has few problems and the past few months have shown further improvement. Anti-social behaviour has decreased greatly since the previous period, with only eleven incidents reported, compared to thirty-five in the previous period. However, theft of motor vehicles have emerged as an issue with six taking place over the last few months. Most of the offences featured mopeds being stolen from Thornton Road and Wellbrook Way. Particular attention is being given to this area. There has been an increase in thefts from shops, the Coop being targeted for alcohol in particular. Two offenders have been arrested and reprimanded.

b) Neighbourhood Watch

Dr de Lacey then briefly introduced his NHW report (attached).

The Chairman invited questions from the floor.

Q. There have been various incidents of windows being shot at. Is this a single culprit?

A. An air rifle was identified as the weapon but no one person has been identified.

Q. I was concerned about a recent firework display held at Wellbrook Way.

A. I am not aware of this incident. Fireworks are permitted up to 11pm. You will need to report incidents if you wish the police to take action.

Q. I have noticed that drivers are not observing the 20mph speed restriction by the school and that cars and lorries are often parked across the pavements through Girton. This causes many problems for pedestrians on their way to and from school. I am also very concerned about people reversing out of their driveways. I have given up reporting parked vans to the police because I have had such an unsatisfactory response.

A. I will pay more attention to these problems. Cllr de Lacey commented that it was worth also reporting such incidences to NHW.

Q. I am concerned that 9/10 incidences reported to the police are not given an incident number. Is there a reason for this?

A. I understood every caller was given a number. Cllr de Lacey noted that if an incident number is refused the called should note the officer's collar number and take the matter up at a higher level.

Cllr de Lacey thanked the PCSO Mahoney for attending the meeting. PCSO Mahoney left the meeting.

Item 11 was brought forward.

11. Report from Peter Duthie, Northstowe Rights of Way Project Manager

Peter Duthie introduced himself and gave a brief report on the newly completed countryside access improvements in the area. He said that improvements had been made to existing rights of way, some new routes had been added and the CC were working on trying to improve information on rights of way. He had brought with him several boxes of a new map indicating the routes around Northstowe for people to take home with them.

The former permissive footpath to Histon had been upgraded to a bridleway and new gates had been put in on the existing public footpath. He also said a new permissive footpath had been established from the Ten Acre Field to join the Histon Wood.

P Duthie reported that his office had been successful in bidding for four new projects this financial year. These include follow-on work for Northstowe and a series of improvements around the City.

P Duthie took the following questions:

Q. I was looking at an old map of the area and noticed a public right of way from Girton to Histon on the NIAB land. Is this an old right of way that is disused and if so could we have it back please!

A. Public right of way are very complicated. There are paths which historically had legal status and may not have made it on to newer maps (from the 1950s). There is a national project looking at lost highways and in Cambridge there is funding from the CC for this work. I will include the footpath at NIAB that you are referring to.

Q. Is a crossing/link planned at the end of Washpit Lane over the A14?

A. We have been liaising with The Highways Agency who are looking at this junction with the A14 improvements. We have made the point that this route needs to be maintained.

Q. Where is the new bridleway?

A. It is next to Beck Brook and ends at St Audreys Close, Histon.

Cllr de Lacey thanked P Duthie for attending the meeting. Cllr Hiley thanked him on behalf of the community for his work in making the improvements happen.

5. Chairman's report for the year

The report had been circulated and members of the audience were given some time to read the report after which the Council received questions and comments.

Q. Can you update us on the problems at Orchard Close Community Centre?

A. No, we are not aware of any developments.

Q. Is the proposed cycle route through Wellbrook Way for cyclists and pedestrians.

A. This is very much at the planning stage but would ideally be for both. It may depend on how much money we are able to put towards it.

Q. How is this possible now when it was declared impossible when Wellbrook Way was planned?

A. Now that the NIAB land is up for development we hope we can encourage the owners to provide a Permissive Right Of Way around the edge of the land. (It was then clarified that part of the land in question is owned by an independent Trust, but the Trust is involved in the development.)

Q. Can I request that the footpath that leads from Thornton Close to Whitehouse Lane is preserved.

A. It won't disappear – it will be incorporated in to the design.

6. Accounts 1st April – 31st March 2008

Copies of the unaudited accounts had been circulated.

Q. What was the architect's fee at Wellbrook Way for?

A. This is for work carried over over the past 2 to 3 years.

7. Report from County Councillor

Cllr John Reynold's report had been circulated. He spoke on issues of secondary school transport, tackling congestion, mobile library, recycling, the A14 and Northstowe.

8. Questions/comments on County Council matters relating to the village

Q. Did he foresee problems at the Gatehouse Road crossing with the guided bus?

A. The speed and frequency of the buses mean that there should be adequate time for pedestrians to cross.

Q. I am concerned that there is no provision for traffic control for pedestrians crossing the Guided Busway at Gatehouse Road.

A. I don't know the answer about advance warning systems.

Q. Does the Donarbon contract include improvements to recycling plastics to include to include more than types 1-3 and will better village pick-up sites be provided?

A. The collection of waste is the responsibility of SCDC and I know they are investing in plastics kerbside collection. The new refuse disposal system we have invested in will sort black bin rubbish to extract what can be recycled. The target to reach is 60% by 2014.

Q. Is the A1307 road surface going to be improved?

A. I agree the road needs re-surfacing. I will have to get back to you on that.

Q. I am concerned that after the congestion charge is introduced there may still be a major accident on the A14. What happens when the traffic has to be diverted?

A. We are hoping the accidents will decrease with the upgrade. We will want to make sure there will be other ways in which traffic can be diverted.

Q. I have noticed a lot of rubbish, especially plastic bags, in the fields surrounding the Donarbon site.

A. I will take this issue up with Donarbon. The local parish council is very hot on making sure Donarbon's blown waste is kept to a minimum.

Cllr de Lacey reported that he had attended the SCDC Planning Meeting where the issue of whether there should be a traffic control at the pedestrian crossing at Gatehouse Road was discussed and the decision was taken that it was not needed. He will be taking this issue further.

9. Reports from District Councillors

Cllr Tom Bygott's report had been circulated. Firstly he thanked Cllr Bullman for the enormous amount of work he has done for the village. He spoke on issues of environmental health, community development, communications, planning, developments affecting Girton, other major developments, housing, bus passes, NATS consultation and Stansted expansion, partners and the future. The planning application for 11 Mayfield Road was to go to the full Planning Committee.

10. Questions/comments on South Cambridgeshire District Council matters relevant to the Village

Q. Are you aware of a planning application from Anglia Ruskin for their sports fields?

A. This has not come before the planning committee. There has in the past been an application for flood lighting. I will make some enquiries.

Q. I am concerned that there is not a proper telephone number for SCDC – 0845 numbers are expensive.

A. I will pass this comment on.

Q. The Town Charity has received requests for assistance for moving expenses from people being rehoused from SCDC housing to Housing Association properties. The Town Charity should not be expected to meet these costs.

A. If people are losing entitlements because they are being moved I think this is appalling. I will pass this on.

Q. Please could you take forward the question of continued problems with Orchard Close community centre.

A. Yes.

Cllr de Lacey explained that he had only been a District Councillor for 4 days, but that he was particularly interested in knowing what the community want him to do. He proposed to set up an email list and would encourage people to mail him with their requests/ comments.

13. Report on the Parish Plan

The Steering Committee's report had been circulated (attached). Alex Duncan introduced himself as Chairman of the Parish Plan Steering Committee. He explained that the parish plan sets out a vision for the community of Girton and a detailed action list for the next 5 years.

Cllr de Lacey thanked A Duncan for his report.

14. Girton Town Charity Report

Cllr Hiley had previously circulated the report (attached) on the Charity's activities.

D Wilson thanked the Town Charity members for all their hard work.

Cllr de Lacey thanked Cllr Hiley for his report.

15. Additional questions/comments from the floor

Q. I am concerned about continuing problems with weekend parking at the Recreation Ground. Please could we ask the PCSO to discourage people from parking on the access road.

A. Yes we shall ask the PCSO. It is also possible to take registration numbers.

Finally the Revd Will Adam said he was pleased that the village had such a faithful parish council, county and district councillors and he thanked the parish councillors for all their efforts. D Wilson expressed thanks to the Clerk.